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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 6058th meeting of the Security Council, held on 22 December 2008, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in the Great Lakes region", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council is grateful for the efforts undertaken by His Excellency Mr. Joaquim Chissano, former President of Mozambique, as the Secretary-General's Special Envoy for the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA)-affected areas. The Council expresses its appreciation for his briefing of 17 December 2008, and agrees with his recommendation that the peace efforts should continue. The Council welcomes President Chissano's readiness to continue in his role for a further period.

"The Security Council reiterates its welcome for the Final Peace Agreement (FPA), negotiated between the Government of Uganda and the LRA, and reached through the Juba Peace Process. The Council commends the Government of Uganda for its continued commitment to the FPA and its investment in the peace process.

"The Security Council condemns the repeated failure of Joseph Kony to sign the FPA. It calls upon the LRA to sign and honour the FPA immediately and to begin the process of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration to ensure a peaceful, political solution.

"The Security Council strongly condemns the recent attacks by the LRA in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Southern Sudan, which pose a continuing threat to regional security. It demands that the LRA cease its recruitment and use of children and that it release immediately all women, children and other non-combatants, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1612 (2005). The Council reiterates its deep concern at the long-running and brutal insurgency by the LRA which has caused the death, abduction and displacement of thousands of innocent civilians in Uganda, the Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

"The Security Council recalls the International Criminal Court arrest warrants for certain LRA leaders on charges of, among other things, war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape and the enlistment of children through abduction. The Council recalls its statement of June 2006 (PRST/2006/28), and reaffirms that it attaches vital importance to promoting

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justice and the rule of law, including respect for human rights, as an indispensable element for lasting peace. The Council reaffirms that ending impunity is essential for a society recovering from conflict to come to terms with past abuses committed against civilians and to prevent their recurrence.

"The Security Council commends the States in the region for their increased cooperation, and welcomes the joint efforts they have made to address the security threat posed by the LRA. The Council calls upon these States to ensure that all actions are carried out in accordance with international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law and to take appropriate measures to protect civilians. The Council encourages these States to keep the United Nations missions in the region informed about their actions.

"The Security Council welcomes the re-establishment of peace and security in northern Uganda. It encourages the Government of Uganda, with the support of international partners, to honour its commitment to accelerate reconciliation, recovery and development in that region through rapid implementation of its Peace, Recovery and Development Plan (PRDP) and relevant Agenda items in the FPA and to disburse anticipated financing for the PRDP without delay.

"The Security Council will continue to monitor the situation closely."